



## USING AERATORS & AERATION SYSTEMS

The use of an aerator has become a popular method of protecting structures from ice damage. Aerators may provide some benefits to individual homeowners however they can often impact neighbors and the public. A permit is not required to install or maintain these devices so long as all of the following conditions are met:

- Aeration systems must be attached to a legal structure (pier, retaining wall, etc.). This can be a previously permitted structure or a structure that is exempt from permitting.
- The operation of an aeration system **cannot adversely impact the public or your neighbors** who may be accessing the lake near your waterfront. You need to ensure that your aerator does not impact the ice on your neighbor's property or create unsafe ice conditions for ice skaters, fishermen, snowmobilers, etc. This can often be accomplished by installing temporary "skirts" around the area to be protected. The "skirts" are commonly made out of a material that will stop the flow of water from the aerator. Any material placed in conjunction with the aerator must be removed immediately after lake/river ice-out.
- Prior to creating any ice holes, you need to design a marking plan. You must mark ice holes that form from your aerator with one of the following methods (Wis. Stats. s. 167.26). Any material used to mark the hole must be removed from the water immediately before or immediately after the melting of the ice.
  1. Erect and maintain a barricade around the holes consisting of uprights that are spaced at adequate intervals to maintain the barricade and that are connected by a continuous rope, cord, or similar material placed at least 2.5 feet and not more than 4.5 feet off the surface. The connecting rope, cord, or similar material shall have reflectorized, fluorescent, or lighted ribbon or tape or other reflectorized devices attached to it, so as to be highly visible, and shall be of sufficient strength to allow for the retrieval of the barricade following melting of the ice.
  2. Erect and maintain a visual warning mechanism that is highly visible and that is reflectorized, fluorescent, or lighted.
- The mixing action from the aerator cannot disturb the lake bottom.

If the system is placed, anchored, or resting on the lake or stream bed, or the aerator cannot meet any of the aforementioned requirements, a miscellaneous structure permit is required. Go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/> for more information and permit applications. If you have any questions, please call a WDNR Water Management Specialist or Conservation Warden. **Please be aware that you are liable for accidents that occur due to improperly marked ice holes.**